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COLLEGE STUDENTS' COMMENTS ON THEIR OWN HIGH-SCHOOL TRAINING

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For some years the writer has conducted a course on secondary education for Junior, Senior, and graduate students. The first paper called for in the course is a brief critical survey of the student's own high-school training. The first motive for this is the belief that one of the most necessary things for success in teaching is a clear and lively recollection of one's own school days; all teachers, especially young teachers, should daily pray the prayer of the chemist in Dickens' story, "Lord, keep my memory green." There are other values that may accrue to the writers of the papers, which need not be discussed here. For my own part I have long felt these papers to be of peculiar value to me in my relations with the class; hardly any other written work of the class proves so interesting and illuminating. It has recently occurred to me that they contain matter worthy of a wider reading; if it is good for these prospective high-school teachers to review their own school days, and sift out the causes and results in them, might not actual high-school teachers find food for reflection and possibly suggestion, both positive and negative, in these critical reminiscences? These young people are no longer children; their position for surveying their secondary education is admirable, for they are far enough

removed from the period to see it comprehensively and yet near enough to see it clearly. Moreover, several years of college—and of life—have given them at least some valuable perspective. Then, they are themselves studying the whole problem of the period objectively with the purpose of fitting themselves to become educators of youth in their turn; hence they have a warm and effective interest in the subject added to their own personal feelings relating to their own experiences. Altogether what they have to say is worth listening to and considering; doubtless they will in many cases be shallow in their criticism and mistaken in their inferences; yet it is not certain that in some matters they may not be better judges than those who still sit in the learners' seats in high schools, or even than we who, far removed from those years, are now teachers. For such reasons as these it has seemed worth while to edit roughly and offer for wider reading some selected passages on various salient aspects of high-school life and education.

At the outset we must recognize the highly selected group which these students constitute: they are mostly Seniors, with a few Juniors and fewer graduates, practically all intending to become high-school teachers; they are not typically representative of college students even, and far less so of high-school students; they are rather the quintessence of success in school work, having safely weathered all the perils of elimination through the four high-school years, and several years of college. Then they are vocationally selected, being teachers in training—in a few cases, indeed, having actually taught. All inferences from their expressions must be tempered by this fact.

In view of this selection, it is not strange that nearly all entered high school "as a matter of course"; as one says:

"There was no question raised as to whether I should or should not go to H.S. . . . It was the natural thing . . . since it was my wish and my parents' wish. I had always got along splendidly, in the grammar grades. Also all my girl friends were intending to go on to high school."

Or again:

"My environment molded my career, without my having anything to say about it. It had always been the ambition of my parents to give me educational advantages, and I naturally carried out their wishes."

The same writer says:

"It never occurred to me until rather recently that I am one of the fortunate ones who have the opportunity of going to high school and among the still more fortunate few who are privileged to pursue knowledge through the medium of college."

Less than 10 per cent report any real uncertainty as to continuing from the grades into the high school; the large majority cite much the same conditions—parents' wishes and plans, success in grades, and, perhaps most potent of all, the fact that their friends were all going and it was considered the thing to go.

On no point is there more unanimity than the want of attention to *bodily health and exercise*: not one has anything favorable to say on this point and many accuse the school *in extenso* of its dereliction in physical education.

"During the first three years I do not recall a single suggestion by any teacher to get out into the open air—or anywhere else. At noon most of us stayed indoors, and either strolled up and down some very dark corridors or sat at our desks and studied. The self-ventilating heating system was then in vogue and the teachers had orders not to open the windows, so that the rooms were often stuffy and the pupils drowsy. During my last year . . . I did play tennis at times, but I had by this time become so settled in inertia that more than a few spurts were needed to draw me out of it."

Another says:

"There was not nearly enough physical exercise in this school. I obtained absolutely none, like most of the girls. The boys were more fortunate, playing football, etc. . . . I think this was the greatest defect in my high school education."

Many others to the same effect. One young man writes:

"I received no physical education except what consisted in warnings against alcohol and cigarettes."

One report deplores the absence of courses in *general hygiene*; "as a result," it is asserted, "the general health and intelligence of the community were lower than they should have been."

Closely related to these complaints are reports of *overpressure*. It is true that only two, and these students of moderate ability, complain of injury to health resulting from quantity of work; but several feel that the mass of required work led to cramming and

mechanical memorizing, and barred all spontaneous thought and activity.

"The student really has to 'cram' so much subject-matter that by the time he gets through he feels that he doesn't know much of anything."

"We had so much to do that I had hardly any time to do anything except get my lessons, so leisure reading was not very extensive. This crowding and overworking of the pupils it seems to me is very bad in many ways."

By a slight digression here we may introduce one of the most interesting comments found in the papers:

"I have seen the struggle for position on the honor roll grow so intense that girls ceased to be friends, eyes failed, nerves gave out as also did morals, and cheating was resorted to."

Naturally one of the most generally discussed points is the *election* of courses and studies: on this question both the experience and the opinions of the group spread over a wide range: about a third attended high schools whose one "course" limited all comers to Hobson's choice. Most, however, enjoyed some latitude, and also had done some thinking over their own experience and that of their friends. One account is so racy and truly descriptive that it must be quoted almost entire:

"When I first entered high school there were two courses. One which they called the 'Classical' included four years Latin, the other consisted of two years Latin, two years of German, Botany, and Physical Geography. Every one was encouraged to take the four years Latin. Perhaps you couldn't understand how Latin would benefit you but you were assured that you would always regret it if you didn't take it. So the only decision in regard to a course which the incoming freshman made was whether he should take Ancient History or Physical Geography. If the freshman had liked United States History in the grades he took Ancient History, if he didn't like history he took Physical Geography, not knowing what it was but thinking that he would surely like it better than history. Each year you took the subjects which you thought you would like or which your chum was going to take, that is, unless you had some idea of what you were going to do when you finished school, then you tried to take that which you thought would do you the most good; but the teacher would persuade you to take something else because you *should* take it, though she might admit that it wouldn't help you in your future vocation. Then there were certain things which you must take if you wished to enter college. Each teacher told you of the requirements of his own Alma Mater and you tried to follow them all because you didn't know which college

you would go to. Your parents tried to help you choose but the courses were changed each year so you must keep changing your course or you could not graduate."

A much briefer but quite accordant opinion is that of the writer who says:

"I think one of the gravest defects of the high school was the fact that we studied many subjects without knowing why we studied them."

Many complain explicitly of the lack of advice and counsel from the teachers:

"Little time was given to advising students about elective studies, in which considerable liberty was given. We all elected studies that we thought would be the easiest and would yet enable us to be admitted to the University. I do not think that many of us, at that time, gave serious consideration to the subject. . . . I had always wanted to take manual training but someone told me that no credit was allowed for it in college, so I never took any. If I had had a reliable adviser, my course would have been very different."

It should be noted that this student, who confesses and accuses concerning "snaps," is herself in the first rank of scholarship.

It is strange and painful to think that even one should have to write:

"After we had decided on the course in our Freshman year we were not allowed to change it during the four years."

The Medes and Persians were evidently not quite extirpated in that school!

To be commended to the consideration of all curriculum-makers is the remark relating to a school with three required and one optional study:

"These optional subjects were a joy to everyone as they enabled them to take some extra work in something they liked."

From choice of studies to choice of *vocation* and training for it is but one short step:

"One of the greatest needs that I myself felt [writes a most thoughtful and able student] especially in the last two high-school years, was the want of some good trusty adviser, who could search out and fathom the true essentials of my career, and guide me in the proper selection of studies."

Not one in the whole group can report any real aid from the side of the school in choosing a vocation or planning suitable preparation

for it when chosen. One young man (himself not planning to be a teacher) says:

"I was always told that my education would be useful to me no matter what I did in life, but sometimes I only half believed it in regard to certain subjects."

Says one, who had herself chosen teaching before she entered the high school:

"It would be so much better if teachers could once in a while try to catch the pupil in one of his moods of confidence and advise him. I would consider this one of his very important duties. Pupils drift and drift unreflectively through school, sometimes with not even the purpose that I was fortunate enough to have."

One of the brightest students chose to be a teacher of mathematics "largely" as she says,

"as a result of my admiration for my first mathematics teacher. . . . But instead of being given any voice in the matter or any aid in my determination I was urged along through a year and a half of the Latin course merely because I did good work in Latin and utterly ignoring my distaste for such work."

The great value of the vocational motive in school work, and incidentally the standard high school's really vocational function—preparation for teaching—both appear in several reports:

"The reason I stayed in school was that I had always wanted to be a teacher and knew that the way to be one was to get more education."

"Had I not felt that I was getting something that really helped toward attaining that end, I should have left school long ago."

"When I first entered the high school I planned to train myself for a teacher. Through all my course this thought, that I was beginning to prepare myself for my vocation, made me obtain great enjoyment from my work and kept my interest always alive."

How easy is the path through the high school into the vocation of teaching and yet how little solid logic there may be in the steps is strongly indicated in the following from one of the ablest and most intelligent girls:

"At this time I thought that the natural and only occupation open to a girl after she had gone through High School and the University was to teach school and I had not been long in the High School before I decided definitely that I wanted to teach Latin. I think the principal factor that influenced me in this choice was the fact that I liked to study Latin and, by putting twice as much time as on any other subject, I was able to keep at the head of the

class. Besides, the teacher was very much pleased with my work, and advised me to continue my Latin study with the view of teaching it. So I decided that this should be my vocation and I never seriously questioned the wisdom of this choice until last year—my Junior year in the University. Thus throughout my four years in High School I liked my studies, especially Latin, because they were of peculiar interest to me as a preparation for the vocation I expected to enter.”

One only, a bright and piquant young lady, felt a negative suggestion:

“I cannot see that the high school had any influence upon my choice of a vocation, except inasmuch as it gave me a distaste (for the time being) for the calling that my family had planned for me, teaching.”

Many interesting comments are made upon the *discipline* of the school and its relation to moral development. The majority complain of lack of freedom for choice and initiative and consequent retardation of volitional growth. The negative character of the training is frequently noted:

“I cannot say how far I was responsible for my conduct: if my will was educated it was only through doing things I disliked.”

“There were not many times when a pupil had to make an important decision, so completely were we cared for by rules. I can almost say that a student could go through the four years without ever having to decide anything more serious than that she disliked her teacher, or that she would have to work harder or fail.”

“I was urged onward in the path in which I had gotten started [says another] with no regard for my adverse desires. As far as any freedom of action was concerned all of that was entirely outside of the school.”

This writer goes on to contrast with the lack of will-training in school the powerful influence of being compelled to make decisions and execute them in her home life, in which, at this time, she carried a good deal of responsibility. Another contrasts the spirit of home government with that of the school:

“In regard to freedom of action and responsibility for conduct, I was encouraged at home to do what really I thought was right, to consider the consequences before I acted, and was held responsible for what I did. I was treated as a child, not as a ‘grown-up,’ but yet as if I had some individuality and common sense of my own. Nothing of this kind was really done by the school. We were lectured on ‘conduct,’ but paid no attention to it.”

It may be profitable for us as teachers to read some of the specific criticisms upon our systems of discipline:

"We had practically no freedom of action. Our Superintendent required strict and rigid discipline and even as Seniors our excuses had to be written by our parents. Examinations were taken with plenty of teachers in the room to see that no cheating was done, and this system if anything developed it, especially in students of weak character."

"We had no such thing as student rule. All classes not reciting remained in the Assembly Hall which was presided over by one of the teachers. Roll call was taken twice daily, and excuses were required for all absences and tardinesses. The student had practically no freedom. Permission had to be obtained for everything and the student was held responsible for everything done from the time he left home until he returned."

Of peculiar interest is the report of a student whose experience was not unmixed, and who attributes diverse results to the contrasting methods:

"As for freedom of action it all depended upon our room-principal. In the halls we were responsible for ourselves and in my freshman room there was the same spirit. In the sophomore room there reigned 'the silence of death' and every one did the same thing, hating the school, each other and most of all the teacher. My third year we were watched every moment, while we enjoyed some liberty again as Seniors. I developed more will power and responsibility my first and last year."

On the other hand not a few are well satisfied: one feels a real increase of voluntary action in passing from grades to high school:

"We now had responsibilities which we had not before. We had been used to all doing the same thing at once, for [in the grades] while one class recited the other studied, and the teacher was responsible, but now, with four different distinct classes, and numerous reciting classes, each must choose what he will do. Often too, there was no teacher in the room, and we must regulate our own conduct. This was often very good for us, for we felt our importance in being left alone."

Another seems fully to approve of the strict regulations:

"The pupils were quite strictly controlled by the rules and regulations of the school. Excuses must be brought from the parents for all absences or tardinesses and failure to appear at any recitation had to be accounted for in every case. If an hour were spent in the library instead of in the study hall, an approval blank must be filled out and signed by the librarian for presentation to the study teacher before the pupil could again be reinstated. And all of these rules are just and proper and necessary."

Still another, curiously enough, actually complains that she and her mates were treated too much as "grown-ups":

"I found things somewhat different from that which I had expected. Right at this point I want to offer the first criticism of the High School. When children leave the eighth grade they are usually not above twelve or thirteen years of age, mere youngsters one might say, and yet when they arrive at High School they must suddenly become regular young men and young women. This was my experience, at least. As a freshman in High School I felt that I had suddenly ceased to be a girl and had become a young lady. The teacher treated and thought of us as 'grown-ups' and the school system and curriculum were of the sort to produce 'grown-ups.'"

The nearest approach to such a criticism, however, in any other paper, is one girl's embarrassment at being addressed as "Miss."

In pleasing contrast with some of the foregoing is the following warm appreciation, which comes, by the way, from a *small high school* in a country town:

"During this period the 'will' was developed, for we were allowed great freedom, but were given to understand that we were trusted completely to do the best and honorable thing at all times. This of course led to the cultivation of honor and pride as well as of will power. My life outside the school was influenced at all times by my school life. It was in the school among my friends and teachers that all my ideals were formed, everything that I did I thought of what the girls and the teachers would think of it."

It should be added that the same student gives the high praise to her teachers found in the last quotation on that subject. (See p. 660.)

In view of the large number of students who come from the country and enter the *large city high schools*, it may be worth while to note that no less than three of these writers describe their entry into the great metropolitan school as painful in the extreme: one actually could not face the ordeal and fled (to come back later and win out):

"I finished all this work and then thought I'd go to the ——— High School, as some of my classmates were going. But when I went over there I couldn't understand the plan at all, didn't know what 'periods' meant nor what the cards they gave me meant, and the great number of finely dressed young people frightened me, a poor country boy. So I went back home after only two days. The complexity of the system drove me away. The city high school is a mighty complicated piece of machinery as compared with a high school with one teacher."

The others must have wanted to run away too, but did not quite do so:

"I was confronted with a new and strange environment and found it hard to appreciate the superior advantages in a large school. I knew no one, missed my old companions and felt helpless before the maze of rooms and the intricacy of schedules. I had a difficult course and no study periods. Just why I continued to go in spite of these things I cannot determine. Perhaps the mental image of teaching was the gleam I followed."

The third is perhaps the most intense of all: how little do we know what may sometimes be going on in the secret hearts of the boys and girls in our schoolrooms!

"I found myself, a timid country girl, thrust suddenly into the rush of the city. The misery experienced during that year in a city high school has never been equalled by anything except the misery of the Freshman year at college. I soon got my bearings, formed a number of semi-friendships and got fairly well interested in my work. I *had* to work—that was the redeeming feature of the year. It was especially good for me then because it deprived me of time for fits of despondency. But in spite of the high standard of the school, the teachers whom I very much admired, and the opportunities for revelling in the mysteries of a new world, I looked forward to the end of the year as to an escape from prison."

On the subject of *social life* in school, experiences and verdicts go far apart. Most wholesome and refreshing is an account from a small high school:

"My Freshman and Sophomore years were spent in a small town where pupils get well acquainted and where a neighbor's interests do not seem so remote as in a larger institution in the city. Action all tended to natural democracy. Class parties, at which our favorite teacher was present, afforded our chief social diversion. It is refreshing to look back and see with what eager anticipation we awaited these little gatherings where wholesome games and music were the sole means of entertainment. They offered opportunity for the expression of the social impulse so vital to normal youth. I daresay this feeling of interest and pride in class and the manifestation of the spirit of friendliness was a tie strong enough to anchor some members who might have been disposed to float away under different conditions."

Another sets forth with abundant optimism the advantages of a larger school:

"But, notwithstanding these various defects in the High School system, there are many excellent things as well. As has often been said, the High School is a democratic institution. Every boy and girl in High School, if

he or she has the proper stuff in them, can come out on top. In other words, every student is more or less on the same footing and equal chances are given to each if they will take advantage of them. There are the Debating Societies, the choruses, the clubs, the oratorical contests, class organizations, athletics, social times, etc.—numerous places where every active student may express himself. This is where the greatest freedom is allowed the student."

Three or four brief but incisive criticisms touch well-known weaknesses, especially in the larger schools:

"The social life in spite of the restraining hand of the faculty was also too complicated, too much modeled after the society of adults. It developed cliques. There was too much clannishness, too much emphasis upon 'those who belong' and those who do not."

"One cause for my rebellious feeling was a spirit of inbred democracy that could not tolerate the exclusiveness so evident, particularly in the upper classes. Then, too, in high school it was a disgrace to be 'broke' and one must always have ready change at hand. In the high school I attended there were fraternities and those 'in' were perfect 'snobs.' When a person was 'rushed' and did not make it they either changed high schools or dropped out."

"I remember nothing in my high school experience that I could adversely criticise. I was so full of enthusiasm for my work that it was all interesting to me. It is true I was unable to enter the social life of the school, but that was because I had no money and dressed poorly; I was sensitive and retiring."

One theme pervades the whole discussion—*the teacher*. All the shades of like and dislike, admiration and contempt, attraction and repulsion are expressed in their turn. There are a few charges of ignorance, as the following:

"My science teacher was a woman who didn't seem to know much more about the subject than some of the boys did as they could 'catch her up' on something almost every day. Many of the recitation periods were taken up by a discussion between the teacher and the boys on some subject they didn't seem to know much about and the rest of the class didn't know anything about. I naturally didn't get much out of the course."

The same writer met also an interesting and probably not uncommon form of indifference or rather preoccupation:

"My first Latin teacher only taught me one year and then was married. She was evidently thinking about getting married most of the time when she taught as she paid attention to hardly anything we said."

Many report indifference in various degrees, especially in all matters outside of the routine of school work: the most extreme case is the following:

"Outside of the hours 9 to 12 and 1 to 3:30 we saw nothing of our teachers and did not want to. They were not human to us: we never thought of them as ever being young and in high school themselves. They seemed a long way off and we dared not approach them."

The same writer declares that one particular teacher seemed "a mere sarcastic machine."

A few are most warm in their appreciation; one in particular describes just the sort of influence that all earnest teachers would greatly desire to exercise:

"The teachers were all very much interested in our work, mentally at least, and their one great aim was to instill in our minds and hearts a great desire for further education. We were always impressed with the idea that to be a help to others should be our aim and that to do those things efficiently we must be good citizens. These things were not told us in mere cold lectures but shown us in different ways by the various teachers."

Says another:

"When I try to consider what was very bad for me, I might say, a teacher, for whom I lost respect, for I judged others by her. . . . And those things which were good for me have been the many noble examples in teachers. . . ."

One report is worthy of being quoted at some length: it is from a man of quite unusual promise, who is now marked by qualities in strong contrast with his character as he describes it before his "awakening." It may well be that the mind unconsciously exaggerates the influence of striking experiences or of persons who have ministered to us in crises, yet one cannot read this narrative without being impressed anew with the great and subtle possibilities of spiritual contact:

"I had dreamed my way through the seventh grade and found myself in the eighth grade. When the greatest changes of puberty overtook me, I was very *dull* and *ambitionless*. [The italics are his.] All one year I loafed in my class, taking an interest in nothing, and of course I failed in the state examination, and not only once but three times, I think. Then I told father I didn't want to go to school any more and he put me 'to work' on our little place. As a matter of fact I spent most of my time fishing and riding bicycles and horses. One whole year I loafed, out of school.

"When school began the year after my protracted vacation I had no idea of returning. I wanted to learn shipbuilding or anything or nothing. But one day shortly after school commenced I stopped at the building to see a friend, and there I met the principal, Mr. S., and he talked to me and told me about

an education and how he would be willing to help me. All my life until that time is like a hazy dream and that day I awoke. I started to school, finished the eighth grade in February and the Freshman year in June. The teacher's stimulus and encouragement came just when adolescence was unfolding my ambitions and imagination. It has been a steady progress till the present."

After narrating certain discouragements he continues:

"But the thirst for an education was upon me. I wasn't ready to give up. Never once since the day the teacher talked with me has it ever occurred to me to give up and quit."

There is surprisingly little comment on *methods* of instruction; possibly this means that discipline, social life, and the personal relations come home to the student more even than the instruction which forms the bulk of the actual school occupation. Possibly also the student feels, consciously or unconsciously, his inability to pass a verdict upon the methods of presenting the various subjects. The commonest criticism is that of bookishness and remoteness from life. One of the ablest and most thoughtful writers says:

"Scarcely any of the subjects I studied were presented as having the slightest relation to my living; they were a certain number of pages in a book that had to be learned. Because of this method of presenting the subject matter I did not get as much benefit out of the course as I might have. . . ."

To the same effect with a little more detail is the following:

"It doesn't seem to me that our school life had much relation to our outside life. Nearly all our subjects were a study of the book with no application or relation to outside affairs. For instance the study of civics was a study of the constitution and we did not connect it with every day affairs even as much as we did in the eighth grade."

Several undertake to sum up the actual mental progress made under the influence of the high-school course; one very thoughtful girl says:

"The chief function the high school performed in my case was to open my eyes to the world outside myself and to create a desire for a greater knowledge of it."

As to moral growth she goes on:

"The greatest good acquired in the period was the quality of self-reliance and this was due not so much to the school's influence as to the fact that I was away from home."

The most extended and most interesting of these summaries is full of hope and encouragement, yet not without its notes of warning, especially in view of the fact that it is written by a student of marked academic success:

"It was what I might call a period of eager absorption, which did its greatest service at a later period when I went to the University. Of course, there was something besides mere absorption. I had a point of view, a basis of attack for most of my practical experiences. I felt I could now talk rather intelligently about local politics on the basis of my civics, that I could understand the workings of the weather bureau from my Physiography. . . . On the whole my High School training did me immeasurable good as a preparation for my career, my private life and my social relations. It would have been most unfortunate if I had not obtained it. Yet, I cannot say that the High School completes the education of the boy or girl sufficiently to enable him to take his place in the world most efficiently, at least to judge from my own case. It left me too unreflective. It took a university course to waken me more fully to the problems of our experiences and to see more efficient methods of attacking them. I needed a philosophy, a standard of judgment, things I did not get in High School. But the High School did prepare me for the dawning that was to come. It laid the foundation at an impressionable age, and made me ready for the commencement of a higher type of thinking that was to come with mature years."

One passage which relates to the high school only indirectly, yet still potently, we cannot refrain from quoting. Its message is indeed rather to parents; to most teachers and still more to principals who have to deal with "cases" of discipline it will bring a wish, almost painful in its intensity, that there were more such homes. From a family life like this come children who easily win success with one hand and joy with the other, and so realize human life in its fulness.

"I very seldom went away from home on any evening during the school week and if I did go out I had to be home by ten o'clock; but every evening after supper we had half an hour or three-quarters of an hour of recreation at home with all the family participating. . . . Each evening we talked over with our parents everything that had happened during the day and during these hours of the evening our interests were their interests and we enjoyed their company and their suggestions. After we had all had a chance to tell what happened in our classes during the day I played the piano and we all sang, and enjoyed ourselves until we were ready to settle down and study. If there was any problem that we could not work or if we were learning a poem and wanted

to recite it to someone, father was always ready and willing to help us and this made us feel that our school work was the most important thing at this period of our lives."

It is clear of course that these accounts of experiences and expressions of opinions are altogether too few in number to be used in positive proof of any general propositions; their value is in what they reflect of the student's thought and attitude, and in such suggestions as they may afford to the teacher and the student of school problems, suggestions which will vary with every individual reader. On the other hand, these extracts taken from about a score of different accounts are truly representative of more than a hundred similar papers which the writer has received and examined. Hence it may be allowable to lay stress upon a few points that stand out in the testimony as a whole.

First, it is notable that the most favorable reports on nearly all aspects of school life come from *small high schools*; the only exception (mentioned several times in passages not quoted) is in respect to equipment, where of course the large school has the advantage, at least over the very small one. But in matters of discipline, social life, personal relations between teachers and pupils and consequent influence upon mind and character, the warmest praise comes in every case from a student in a small school. On the other hand, heavy charges are made against large schools, including snobbery, caste, and extravagance; mechanical methods in discipline and instruction; the submergence of the individual; and the almost total lack of personal touch between teacher and pupil. Large high schools are increasing with almost incredible rapidity, far out of proportion even to the increase of enrolment; in 1893 there were in the whole United States only ten high schools with over 1,000 students enrolled; today it is but a small city that does not have a school of that size, and there are probably twenty for every one in 1893.

In the next place there is almost a consensus of feeling and opinion on the need of more *personal touch* between teacher and pupil; this is an old story, and yet it receives new force from the words of these young people now in college who record errors in selection of studies, loss of power and warmth in their school life, and other

damage, due to the wall of separation between them and their teachers; moreover these are the very persons who, if any in the high school, would have attained intimacy with the teachers—they came from good families with intellectual traditions, were bound forward on the road of academic training, and were destined in most cases to become teachers themselves—indeed in several instances had already chosen this career. If they complain of the lack of personal acquaintance, what of the many whose condition was less favorable?

Not once is any mention made of *religion* in any form or manner; and only once of “opening exercises,” and then only in a slight and incidental way. (This in a passage not quoted.) If we were writing on symptoms in education more should be made of this striking omission; as it is we can merely point to it in passing.

Finally the papers themselves, and we hope the fragments here presented, carry the encouragement that comes from feeling the warmth and vigor of the minds and hearts of healthy young people of school and college age; they are serious without being solemn; open-minded, and pretty clear-sighted; able to criticize sharply, but ready to appreciate and praise without stint. Much may be wrong with our educational plans and machinery, but closer contact with the “educands” is almost always a tonic for him who is beginning to be discouraged.